

OPC BULLETIN



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Salisbury demolishes historical 'ikons' which distort events of USSR revolution

Harrison Salisbury, fresh from hosting the Overseas Press Club awards dinner on April 18, appeared at the OPC club room once again on April 20, at a luncheon to discuss his new book, *Black Night, White Snow*, published by Doubleday.

Salisbury, a newspaperman all his life, has spent half of that life "living with Russia." He has received many awards and honors for his Soviet reporting, including the Pulitzer Prize, the George Polk Memorial Award, and the Sigma Delta Chi award. In 1947, he joined the staff of the *New York Times* as Moscow correspondent and has written over a dozen books on Russia and its Revolution.

His newest book is an attempt to present the facts about that Revolution, to demolish some of the "icons" which surround it. When people ask him why he was "so presumptuous" as to write another book on the subject, Salisbury's answer is that "most books about the Russian Revolution were written by political partisans, both pro and con the Russian government, and seem to me to be varnished icons — the image of the perfect revolution, the image of the perfect revolutionary leaders, with Lenin, the all-wise, far-seeing, skillful strategist and planner; the man who knew precisely what he wanted and who set himself about to obtain it." This book is an effort to put the story into its proper perspective.

The book debunks such myths as the legendary "taking of the Winter Palace" in St. Petersburg. The truth, Salisbury says, is that peasant Red guards entered the various 300 doors to the palace almost singly, and were individually arrested by the guards within. Toward midnight of that fateful night, the Red guards realized that they, as prisoners, were more numerous than the guards and so, in effect, they were in possession of the Palace without knowing it. Hardly material for an Eisenstein movie!

Salisbury says that for many years he has been going back to the original eye-witnesses to the Revolution to see whether, in fact, the events that we now accept to have happened did really occur. Not entirely to his surprise, he reports in this book, that many of the things we have been taught to believe about the Revolution simply are untrue and did not happen at all. "This is not an uncommon circumstance," he added. "Many truths are still coming to light about our own Revolution. It was many, many years later that anyone dared to write that George Washington was not a perfect character."

The truth, he says, is that neither Lenin nor Stalin had anything to do with the actual Revolution, and only

later claimed to be active participants. There is no evidence to prove that these two men even knew each other in those fateful days.

"The Revolution of 1917 didn't know where it was going," observed Salisbury, "but Lenin came in later on with a very precise idea of where he wanted to go. He was able to ride this fantastic tidal wave that was sweeping away the past and direct it into what he thought was the future. It turned out he was just directing it right back into the same cul-de-sac from which he thought he had led it. In other words, they went right back to the same kind of primitive autocracy, the same kind of police rule, and authoritarianism which had been the bane of the tsar's rule."

—Rosalind Moore

'We were manipulated,' Szulc tells Shop Talk

"My God, did I really write this? Did I really believe this?"

That's how Tad Szulc reacted to his by-lined stories on Page 1 of the *New York Times*, re-reading his coverage of Nixon and Kissinger several years later.

Szulc, 20 years a foreign affairs correspondent for the *Times*, now writing books and magazine articles, was discussing the research that went into his book *The Illusion of Peace*, just released by Viking Press.

"We were not aware how manipulated we were," he told an OPC Shop Talk audience. "I'm professionally rather shocked the way we'd been had ... We'd been sucked in by the majesty of the White House ... and by the National Security Advisor."

Szulc distinguished between secrecy for national security reasons and "secrecy used to mislead, misguide public opinion in this country and the world at large ... We were misled in terms of what kind of policy we were really following ... We transmitted misinformation to our readers," he said.

Today, he said, instead of being reduced to a single source of information on foreign policy — "Dr. Kissinger, the only game in town" — the newsman's problem is which spokesman really speaks for administration policy.

"Is it Carter, Andy Young, Cy Vance, Brzezinski, Jordan?"

How can newsmen avoid being manipulated in the future?

"The answer is not very sophisticated," Szulc said. "It's what they teach in first-year journalism: leg work."

—George Burns

The changing of the guard



Out-going OPC President Matthew A. R. Bassity passes the reins to his successor, Henry Gellermann. Photo Credit: Helen Mandel

NEW YORK, May 76 — The Overseas Press Club announced today that Henry Gellermann, retired general partner and first vice president in charge of public relations for Bache Halsey Stuart Shields Incorporated, had been unanimously elected president of the international journalism organization. He succeeds Matt Bassity.

Formerly a business and finance reporter for United Press and an active member of the OPC for 36 years, Gellermann was first elected to the board of governors in 1950. He has served as a vice president since 1970 ("with time off for good behavior in 1975") and has been one of the most popular vote getters in recent club history. This was Gellermann's first run for the presidency.

Also elected were literary agent Anita Diamant Berke as treasurer; Grace Naismith, who just co-authored "The World of Roger Tory Peterson" with husband John C. Devlin, as secretary; educator-journalist Marguerite Cartwright as vice president; financial communications executive Louis Calderoni as vice president; labor-management columnist and editor Lawrence Stessin as vice president. All were unopposed for election.

According to the election committee, there were 568 ballots cast in the election; 337 were cast by active members and 231 by associate members.

Elected to the board of governors (in order of votes received) were: Henry Cassidy, Mary Hemingway, Rosalind Massow, Kenneth Giniger, Jean Bear and Joseph F. D'Angelo. Elected as alternates were Alfred Balk, George Bookman, James Hanchett and Albert Wall. From the ranks of the associated membership, Gloria Zukerman and Harry Rand were elected to the board of governors with Charles J. Schreiber and William J. Wilson as alternates.

—Chas. Schreiber

Declaring his dedication to "making it the best press club in the world", Henry Gellermann was installed as the 27th president of the Overseas Press Club at its 39th annual meeting Monday, May 15, 1978.

Gellermann succeeds Matt Bassity who earlier had withdrawn his candidacy for president due to business and health reasons. Bassity was given a rousing applause by the nearly 100 members attending for his conduct of the office during the past two years.

Highlight of the evening was the report by Chairlady Gloria Watson of the Committee of Judges of the Election on the outcome of the recent balloting.

PRESIDENT:

Henry Gellermann

VICE PRESIDENTS:

Larry Stessin 1st VP; Lou Calderoni; Marguerite Cartwright

TREASURER:

Anita Diamant Berke

SECRETARY:

Grace Naismith

ACTIVE BOARD MEMBERS:

Jean Baer, Henry Cassidy; J.F. D'Angelo; Kenneth Giniger; Mary Hemingway; Rosalind Massow

ACTIVE ALTERNATES:

Alfred Balk; George Bookman; James Hanchett; Al Wall

ASSOCIATE BOARD MEMBERS:

Harry Rand, Gloria Zukerman

ASSOCIATE ALTERNATES:

Charles Schreiber; Bill Wilson

Bassity opened the meeting, calling first on Anita Diamant Berke for
(Continued on page 2)

CALENDAR

Thursday, June 1, 5:30-7:30 p.m. — Book Reception. Edith Lynn Hornik, author of *The Drinking Woman*.

RESERVATIONS: Please call Mary Novick, 687-2430. Reservation cancellations must reach the OPC 24 hours before the event, otherwise members will be charged the announced fee.

POSTPONED

The Overseas Jazz Club has postponed its June 14 salute to the International Jazz Federation scheduled as a twilight session from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Thoughtful magazines do have a place, claims *Saturday Review's* Carll Tucker

Carll Tucker, the new under-30 editor of *Saturday Review*, was guest at a Shop Talk luncheon at the Overseas Press Club on May 4.

Tucker, who was passed the torch by long-time editor Norman Cousins says his aspirations are to put *Saturday Review* on the world map. He is "out to conquer the world of ideas in new, contemporary ways and report them impartially, with style, and with responsible optimism."

"What I would like to consider with you today is the often-repeated, often-lamented demise of thinking in America," said Tucker. He admits the difficulty of getting people to read a general magazine that deals in ideas.

Tucker, who spent 15 months under the guidance of Cousins before taking over the reins of the magazine, originally thought that neither the public nor the advertising community cared for thoughtful periodicals. He had heard that *Saturday Review* was a "fragile entity," held together solely by respect and affection for Cousins, and "that respect and affection were not transferrable."

But facts did not bear out these theories. He said he has found that the *Saturday Review's* million and a half readers are not alone in their concerns — that 5 to 8 million other Americans are reading similarly thoughtful magazines. The periodicals that are directed at the readership are doing remarkably well in terms of advertising, and their numbers have swelled, not shrunk, in recent years.

"Book sales," declared, Tucker, "have steadily increased over the last two decades. Recent statistics show

that more than 3,000,000 books are purchased every day in this country." Similarly, he said, the number of magazine readers is increasing at the rate of more than 6% a year.

The job for an editor of a thoughtful magazine is not to debate whether people are interested in thoughtful journalism, said Tucker, but to discover the right contemporary means to convey thought. A good editor is, in a sense, a strategist in a fight for people's attention. "If you're selling 'skin,' he said, "you know what your audience wants. Selling thought is a little more difficult."

The ideal *Saturday Review* reader is a busy, involved, professional person. He appreciates elegant writing, but is less interested in the writing than in the subject. He has a catholic curiosity about his world, its culture, books, travel, sports and current events.

Although all critical pieces, and some feature pieces, are staff-written, *Saturday Review* does have a small free-lance market. No fiction, but they are interested in cartoons and idea pieces. However, please query them before embarking on a project for their market.

—Rosalind Moore

Changing guard

(Continued from page 1)

the Treasurer's Report. It was encouraging, indicating that the Club was financially better off than last year. Prospects for the next two years were described as bright.

After hearing a heartening membership report from Harry Rand, Louis Calderoni announced that the Club's annual publication, *Dateline*, will be published next month.

In his brief acceptance remarks, Gellermann, an active member for 36 years, expressed confidence in the Club's future. "I will encourage involvement of the talents of all members, especially the young, in further rejuvenating the Overseas Press Club," he stated. "I want liveliness and conviviality among our membership," Gellermann added, giving the impression that he will be a president of few words and lots of action.

—David Anderson

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WHO, WHAT, WHERE

By GRACE NAISMITH

HONORS: David Horowitz, consumer ombudsman of L.A., won an Emmy for his "David Horowitz Consumer Buyline" program. It is now in syndication and is scheduled for 40 cities in September. The "information entertainment" program airs in N.Y. on Saturday nights at 11 PM on WNEW-TV.

SEEN ON THE SCENE: Raymond Smuts, deputy news editor of the *Sunday Times* of Johannesburg, South Africa, with Ralph Leviton of Union Carbide. Smuts attended a reunion at Macalester College in St. Paul, Minn. where he was a World Press Institute Fellow in 1968. As one of the sponsors of the Institute, Leviton attended its annual forum in St. Paul, which included this year's Pulitzer Prize winners in journalism... Peter Grimm, seen near the scene, recently commented on the high caliber of our programs this year.

MEMORIAL SERVICES for William Downs former OPC member, were attended in Washington, D.C. by the Who's Who of journalism, including many OPC members. Downs, an ABC correspondent, died in Washington of cancer, May 3. A second memorial service in New York May 8 arranged by Walter Cronkite and Charles Collingwood, included honoring guests Stanley Swinton, William Pepper, Robert Vermillion, Tom Wolf, Lou Cioffi, Les and Betty (Furness) Midgley, and many others. Downs, veteran foreign journalist, started on the Kansas City Star, was with UPI in Europe, joined CBS at the request of Ed Murrow during the war and switched to ABC after his return to the U.S.

PUBLISHING: Ann Elmo, literary agent, has an article in the 1978 "Writer's Handbook" published by The Writer in Boston. Subject: "The Role of the Literary Agent Today."... Herbert Silverman wrote on the whisky trail in Scotland — the distilleries in the central highlands where tourists may taste and sightsee. The San Diego *Evening Tribune* published Herb's article... Arnold Brackman reports the sale of his "The Dream of Troy" published in 1973, to a Spanish publisher... Jack Harrison Pollock's profile of autograph dealer, Charles Hamilton, in May-June Americana. An excerpt of his Earl Warren forthcoming biography in a recent *Chicago Sun-Times*... Don Gussow has a new book, "The New Merger Game," published by Amacom. Gussow is chairman and editor of Magazines for Industry, Inc.... Theodore Macauley wrote about Provence where he has lived for three years in the Christian Science Monitor, May 6. Ted is European correspondent for Pegasus, west coast travel magazine... Nelson Joyner in his fourth edition (1978) of "Doing Business Abroad: Joyner's Guide to official Washington," identifies virtually all U.S. government experts, services, and documents each facet of International business. Cable address: Enjoy-Washington... Hammond, the map publishers is publishing Ray Shaw's new book on exciting vacation experiences in remote parts of the world. She invites OPC members to contribute such adventures... William Pages, whose articles on Jewish communities overseas appear in Metropolitan New Jersey Jewish News, can now

be heard on "News and Views from the Seventh City" Tues., Wed. and Thurs. at 8:15 on WFMU — FM.

PROF: Norman Lobsenz at USC, teaching a graduate course in "Writing the Non-Fiction Book."

NEW LOOK: Werner N. Brandis, president and new program chairman of New York Business Press Editors, writes that Donald A. Cannon, former editorial director of Dun-Donnelley's, International Group has moved to Sutton Publishing, White Plains, as editorial director. Ruth Stidger, editor-in-chief of Mining Equipment International, will be first vice-president of NYBPE. Brandis says that other OPC members of NYPBE are Tom Kraner and Larry Stessin and Ralph Leviton.

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